

HOUSE BILL 20

C5

0lr0566

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Delegate V. Turner**

Requested: September 10, 2009

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2010

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Service Companies – Termination of Electric or Gas Service – Notice**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a public service company from terminating electric or
4 gas service to a residential customer because of nonpayment without providing
5 certain notice related to certain bill assistance programs; prohibiting a public
6 service company from terminating electric or gas service to a residential
7 customer over a certain age because of nonpayment without providing certain
8 notice related to certain bill assistance programs; requiring the notices to meet
9 certain requirements; providing for the construction of this Act; requiring the
10 Public Service Commission to adopt regulations to carry out this Act; and
11 generally relating to public service companies and the termination of gas or
12 electric service to residential customers.

13 BY adding to

14 Article – Public Utility Companies

15 Section 7–307.2

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
19 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Public Utility Companies**

21 **7–307.2.**

22 **(A) A PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY MAY NOT TERMINATE ELECTRIC OR**
23 **GAS SERVICE TO A RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER BECAUSE OF NONPAYMENT**
24 **WITHOUT FIRST NOTIFYING THE CUSTOMER IN WRITING OF STATE BILL**
25 **ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(B) IN ADDITION TO THE NOTICE REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS**
2 **SECTION, A PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY MAY NOT TERMINATE ELECTRIC OR GAS**
3 **SERVICE TO A RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER AT LEAST 65 YEARS OF AGE BECAUSE OF**
4 **NONPAYMENT WITHOUT FIRST NOTIFYING THE CUSTOMER IN WRITING OF BILL**
5 **ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE IN THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE CUSTOMER**
6 **RESIDES.**

7 **(C) THE NOTICES REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTIONS (A) AND (B) OF THIS**
8 **SECTION SHALL:**

9 **(1) BE DESIGNED TO GIVE THE CUSTOMER THE OPPORTUNITY TO**
10 **APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE BILL ASSISTANCE IN TIME TO AVOID TERMINATION OF**
11 **SERVICE; AND**

12 **(2) EXPLAIN HOW TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT EACH**
13 **BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

14 **(D) THIS SECTION DOES NOT LIMIT THE AUTHORITY OF THE**
15 **COMMISSION TO ADOPT, BY REGULATION OR ORDER, ADDITIONAL LIMITATIONS**
16 **AND CONDITIONS ON TERMINATION OF ELECTRIC OR GAS SERVICE THAT ARE**
17 **MORE PROTECTIVE OF CONSUMERS.**

18 **(E) THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS**
19 **SECTION.**

20 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
21 October 1, 2010.